

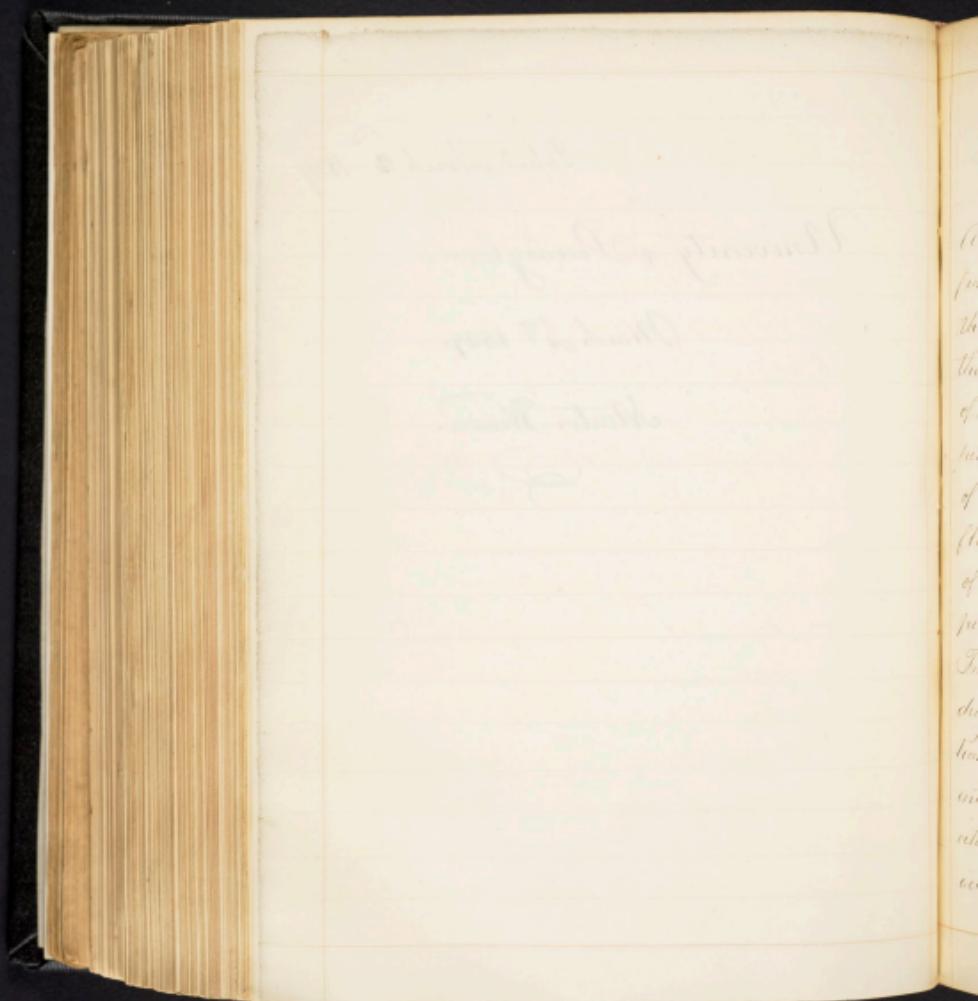
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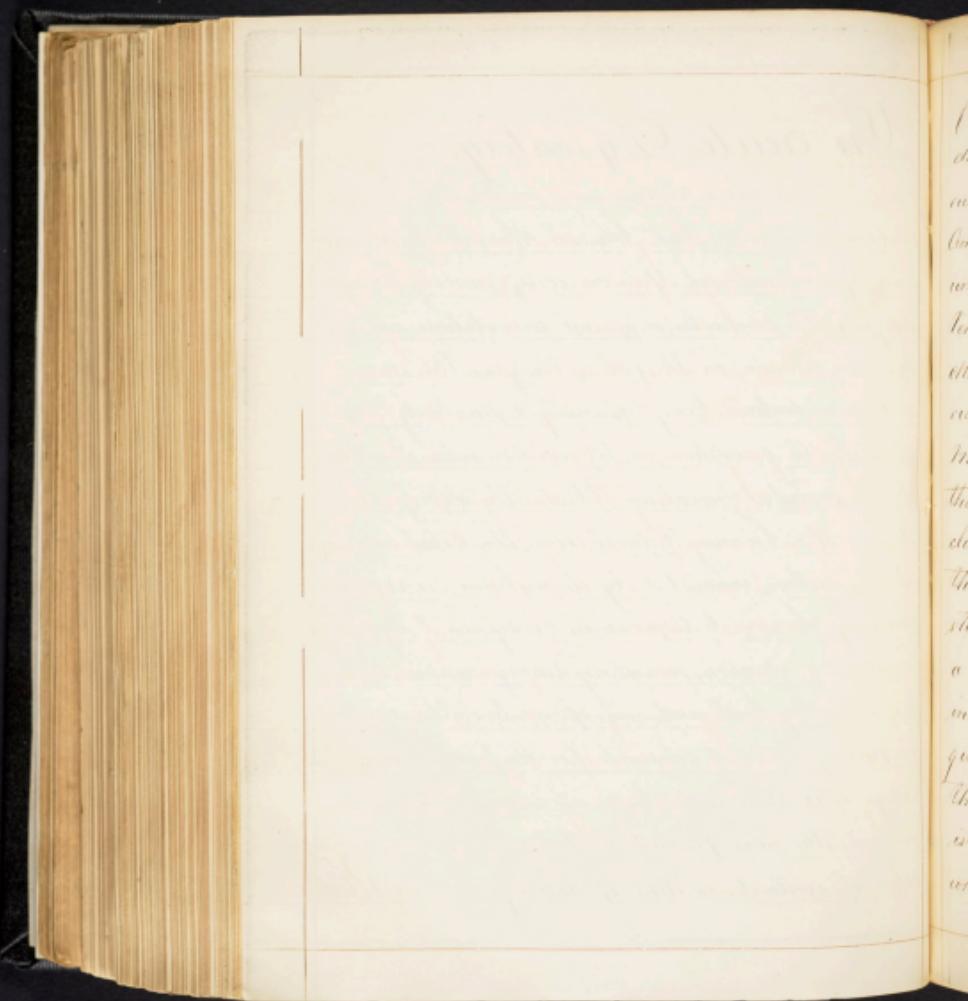
Morton Weaver.

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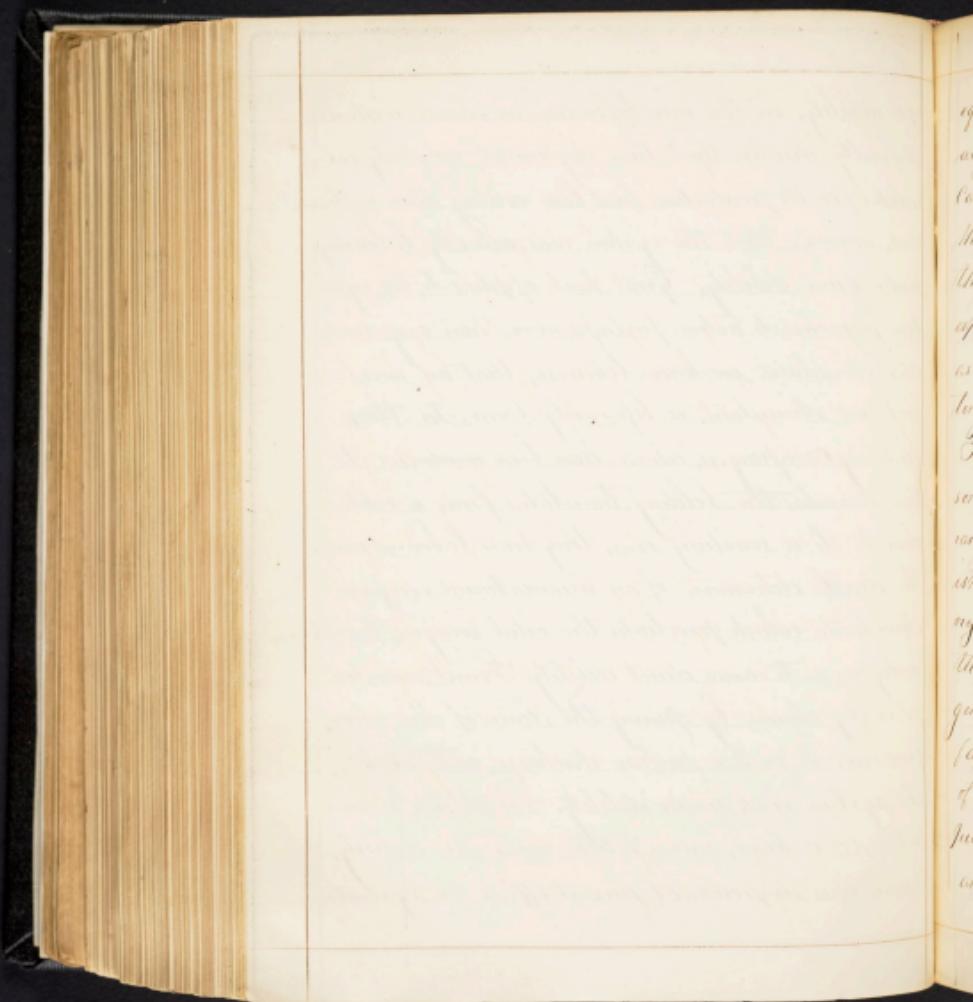


On acute Dysentery.

This is a disease, more particularly, of the autumnal months; but like all other afflictions, unconnected by circumstances, sporadic cases, occurring throughout the year. It particularly, or special devastations, manifest themselves, however, in the fall of the year. The season of the year, indeed, being especially, or peculiarly propitious, for its generation in tropical climates. It is also of more manifest prevalence. Under the oppressive influence, of a burning tropical sun, the vital energies of the system, exhausted, by its influence, is rendered peculiarly obnoxious to those causes, giving rise to Dysentery. In military excursions, marching through countries, abounding in sultry heats, and, excepts of malaria, this combination, proving the most adequate, for the production of Dysentery. All diseases, perhaps, are maintained by circumstances; the most favourable state of the system, for the action of excretants, is that of debility, were we to look

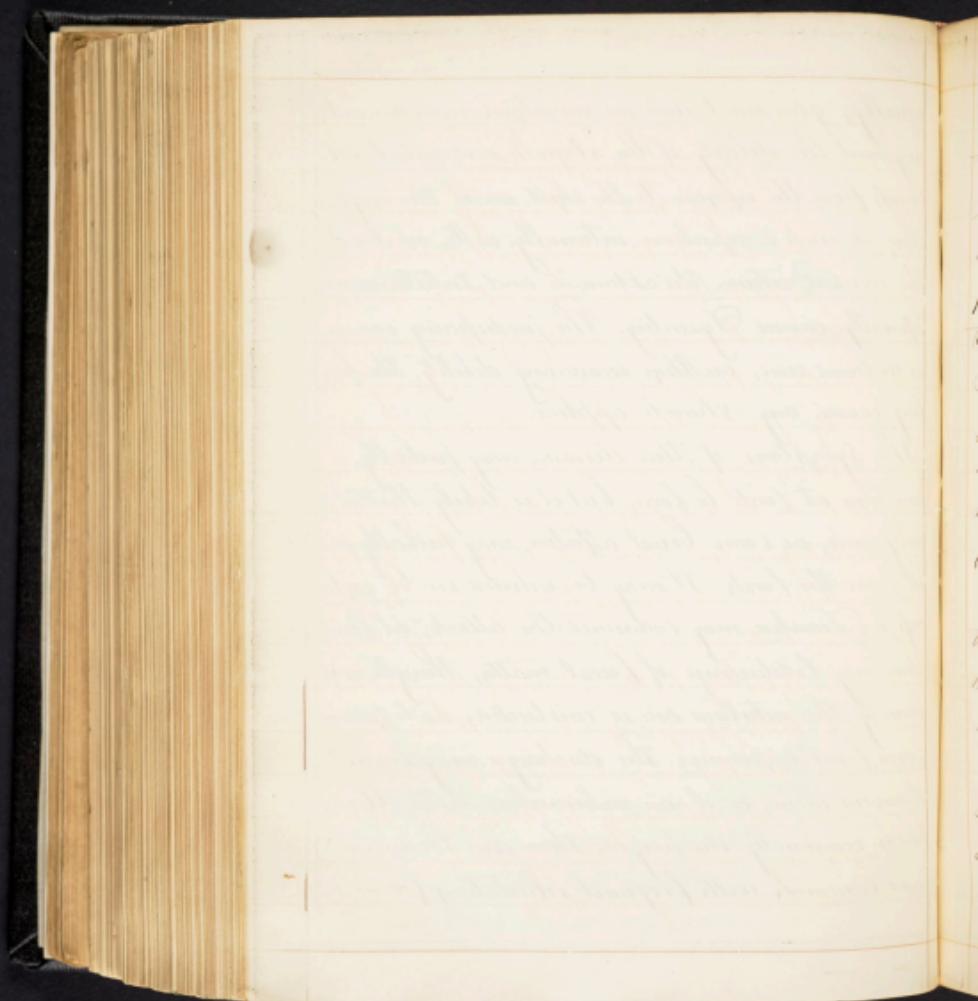


for debility, in the case before us, we should without difficulty discover, that those very causes, every way calculated for its production, had been exerting their influence. And, moreover, that the system was, actually labouring under great debility. Great heat applied to the system, preaches to action, perhaps, more than any one other stimulus; for, known, likewise, that an unaccustomed stimulant, is less easily borne. In those military campaigns, which have been conducted, to these remarks, the soldier, translates from a cold climate, to a scorching sun, they have laboured under, the double detriment, of an unaccustomed, excessive stimulant, which prostrates the vital energies, to such a degree, as to cause direct debility. Forced marches, in sultry climates, by opening the pores of the skin, give rise, to such a profuse discharge, as to make, the system sink under debility. Food then administered, of a kind, incompatible with this debility, which, it is supposed, at present affects the system.

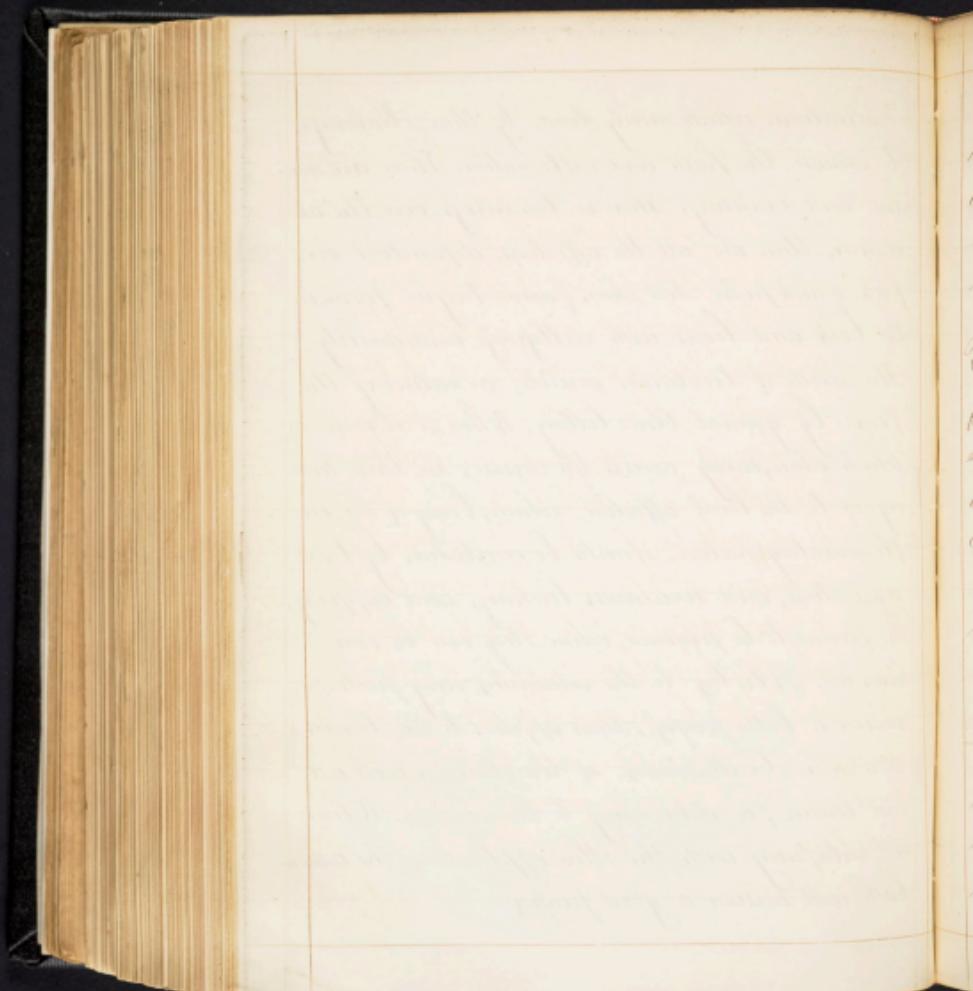


equally gives rise to such an unnatural irritation, as to augment the debility of the stomach and intestinal canal; from the exposure to the chill air of the night, there is such a repulsion internally, as to overload the weaker virtue, the Stomach and Intestines more especially, causes Dysentery. The predisposing causes, as we have seen, are those occasioning debility, the exciting causes, any stimulus applied.

The symptoms of this disease, may probably, sometimes at first, be fever; but it is likely that it is rarely such, as, some bowel affection, may probably exist from the first; It may be ushered in by cogitations, or, Diarrhoea may commence the attack; at first there may be discharge of faecal matter, though most generally the intestines are so contracted, as to prevent faeces from appearing; The discharge may consist of mucus alone, or of an inflammation with blood; this is occasionally discharged. There are Tremors and Tremens, with frequent solicitations for —

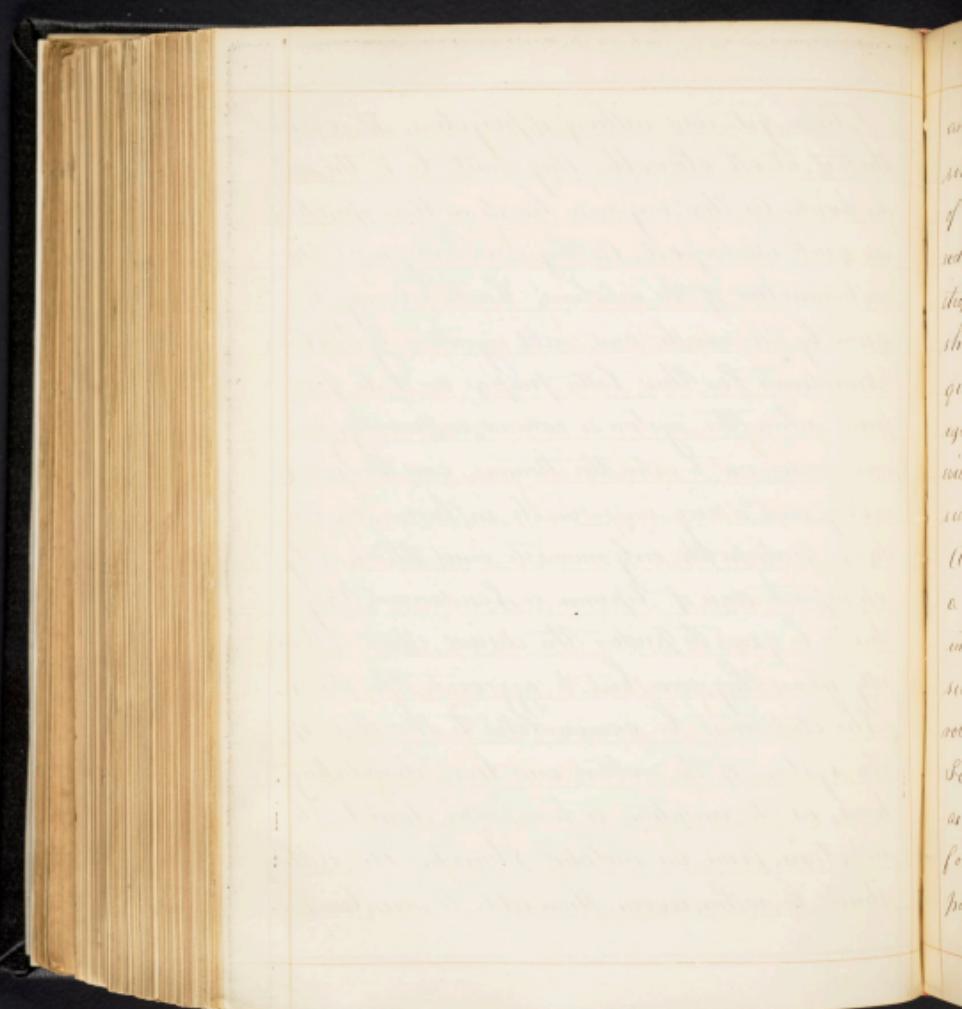


evacuations, which merely tend, by their straining,
to increase the pain and inflammation. There are now
sore and vomiting. There is tension over the ab-
domen, there are all the affections, dependent on
fever, quick pulse, hot skin, furred tongue, pain in
the back and loins, with restlessness and anxiety.
The mode of treatment consists, in reducing the
fever, by general blood letting; When it is reduced
which alone, rarely arrests the disease, we then have
regard to the local affection, which, being of an in-
flammatory nature, should be combated, by local
evacuations, and rectives; leeching, and cupping,
the former to be preferred, when they can be con-
sidered. Blisters to the extremities may perhaps,
answer a better purpose, than applied to the tender
abdomen. Antimonials, if the stomach will ad-
mit them, for detumescing to the surface; When
not interfering with the other applications, the warm
bath will answer a good purpose.

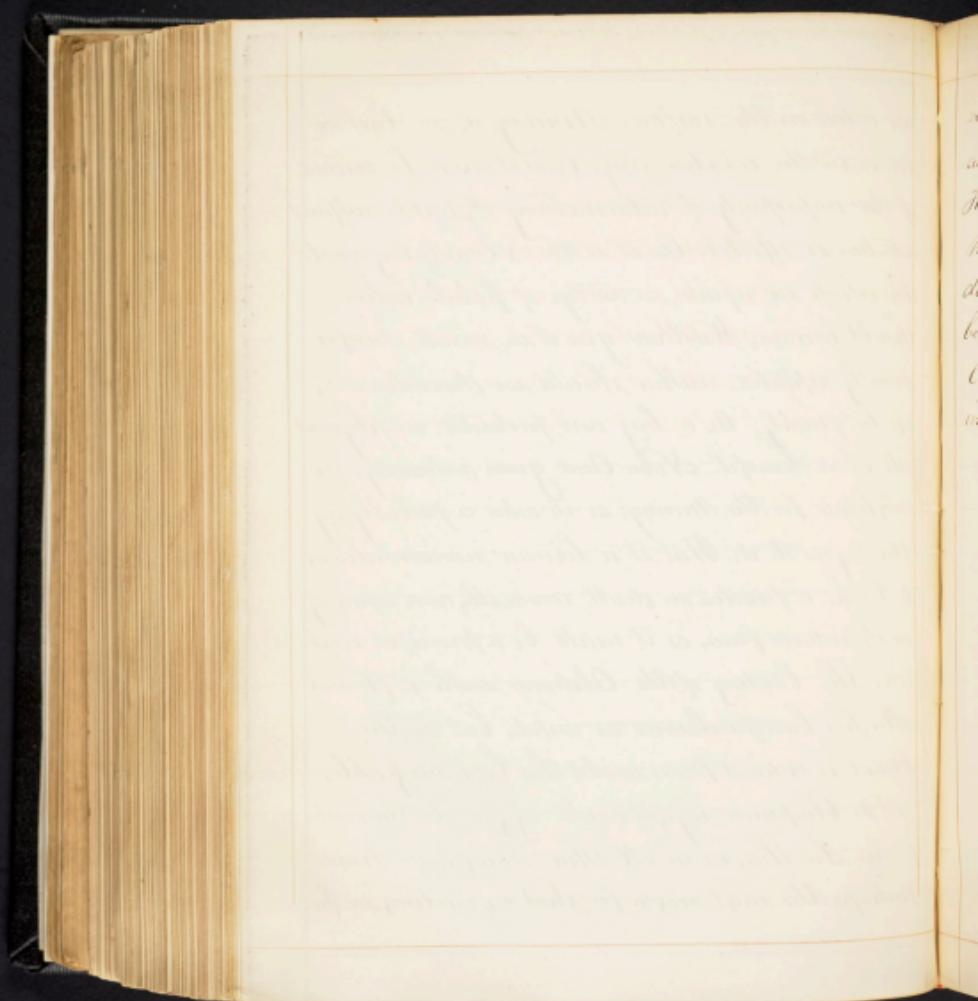


I have yet said nothing of purgatives; It is evident that if at all allowable, they must be of the milder kinds; as those, any wise harsh in their operation, are quite inadmissible; As they would augment the inflammation of the intestines; Castor oil may be given by the mouth, and mild injections by the Colon. Enemata for this latter purpose are to be prepared, when the system is reduced sufficiently, we must endeavor to calm the termia, and rheumatis, as they exert a very unfavorable influence, on the disease. Perhaps the only means to arrest them, is by appropriate doses of Opium or Sardanum, they should be given to produce the desired effect; if unadvisedly given they serve but to aggravate the disease.

The diet must be accommodated to the state of the system, of the mildest and least stimulating kind, as the irritation, is transmitted, direct to the intestines, from an irritated Stomach. The clothing should be, rather, warm than cold, to maintain an



an action on the surface. Mercury is our last resource in the curative way, and it must be evident of the impropriety of administering it, until sufficient reduction is effected. As it is the stimulating quality which we require, no vestige of febrile action should remain; When given in small doses frequently repeated, neither should we discontinue its use too quickly; As a long and protracted employment will alone benefit. Nitre Acid given internally, is a substitute for the Mercury, as its action is probably very analogous to it; But it is likewise recommended as a bath, a practice no doubt serviceable, more especially in its reduced form, as it would be a powerful sudorific. The banding of the Abdomen with a flannel roller, has been proclaimed as useful, but in the second or reduced form, would this be admissible, as Dr Chapman says, it would aggravate the exuberant form. In this, as in all other diseases, we have perhaps the most reason for strict injunctions in the



respiratory stage, patients can be liable, to slight the
admonitions of the physician, and occasion a return.
He should avoid all exposure in inclement weather,
he should not letake himself from the house at night,
damp air should be avoided, and the diet should
be strictly accommodated to the state of the disease;
as it may have, at first produced it, so it will,
in all probability, reprecive it, if not strictly guarded.

